ANGELINA JOLIE: BEHIND THE LENS

SHE SHARES WHY THE WORLD NEEDS HER FILM. PAGE 14

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One for the birds

Season wrap. The Eagles' record-setting offense was made irrelevant by their putrid defense as the team faltered down the stretch. PAGES 24-25

Mark Sanchez was effective in leading the Eagles offense during the second half of the season, but his tendency to turn the ball over led to the team's eventual demise. / GETTY IMAGES

Mummers is the word at Philly parade

PAGE 02

New year, new ways Obama can hinder GOP

PAGE 08

Tim Burton turns a small budget into 'Big Eyes'

PAGE 15

Life after NYE: What to do this weekend

PAGE 17

1

NEWS

Top 3

The Best of Metro.us

1 "Gun deaths for U.S. officers rose by 56 percent in 2014: report"

2 "Interview: Tim Burton says 'Big Eyes' is a 'dark rom-com psychological horror movie comedy'"

3 "Train Spotting [Stony Brook Station]: Adam Cupples at the Sam Adams Brewery - Metro.us"

On the go

Want to read Metro on your mobile device? Get the app! All you have to do is search for Metro US in the App Store or Google Play to get all the latest in news, sports, lifestyle and entertainment for free.

Mummers unleashed: Bright costumes, coordinated dances and plenty of open containers kept this year's parade lively. / PAIGE OZAROSKI HAEDO, METRO

Shortened Mummers route draws faithful

Tradition. Locals and visitors braved the cold to celebrate the country's oldest folk festival.

Two members of the Joey Howlett Junior Saints, a Mummers group, carried a sign in Thursday's Mummer's Parade that read: "Free Big Red" with pictures of their red-headed friend.

Their reasoning? If a South Philadelphian won't participate in the traditional Mummers Day parade, embarrass him until he does.

Under the redrawn route, the 2015 parade only stretched one mile from City Hall to South Philadelphia.

"He's our friend and he doesn't go out on New Year's," Tim Cacciatore, 21, of 2nd Street, said. "He hates New Year's and he's from Philly. And he's stuck inside."

"He's stuck inside all the time because of his girlfriend," Cacciatore's friend and fellow Mummer, Nick Gautieri, 20, of Front and Wolf Streets, deadpanned. "So we're trying to Free Big Red and get it out there for everybody to help."

The two friends who grew up together call themselves "city brothers."

"We've been doing this our whole lives," Cacciatore said, while holding the sign, a Miller Lite can and puffing on a cigarette.

"I'm 20 years old," Gautieri said with a mouth full of fake gold teeth. "This is my 20th year. I've been doing this since I was in a stroller."

So many outsiders find it difficult to understand what the parade is about and what it is, the two acknowledged, but had no trouble answering a question they say they answered many times before.

"It's strutting and dancing to the music," Cacciatore said. "It's a party."

Meg Feerick and her two cousins came down from New York to see what all the Mummer hoopla was all about. "It's something different," she said.

Feerick described it as a "very creative situation."

Pat Mulraney, a native of Houston and graduate of Texas A&M University, took in his first-ever parade on Thursday.

He was persuaded by his brother-in-law, Joe Hall, who said he wasn't thrilled about the changes.

"It sucks," Hall said. "They should bring back the prize for the Mummers, too. The city took away the $150,000 prize because the city's broke. Maybe Tom Wolf can get it back."

So, what's Big Red missing?

"A bunch of people with open containers drinking outside," Mulraney said.

Mummers hold a sign reading, "Free Big Red." /TOMMY ROWAN, METRO

More Mummers

Come February, about 10 of the total 17 Mummers string bands will once gain break out their New Year's Day best for a Mardi Gras parade down Main Street.

- The parade, which will start at 10 a.m. and last until noon, will take place on Feb. 22.
- This is the 100-year-old group's first foray into Manayunk. The group hopes the parade becomes a new tradition.
- Some of the money raised at the new February parade will help defray costs of the historic New Year's Day tradition.

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Philly leaders' wishes for '15

From local politicians to those working with the city's neediest citizens, six Philadelphians share their hopes for a positive new year.

DAVE WARNER AND SAM NEWHOUSE, METRO

Mayor Michael Nutter

As he begins his last several hundred days in office, Mayor Nutter isn't slowing down.

"The big issues in 2015 are schools and educating our children," he said. "If we focus on those two issues, than issues of public safety and crime will go down."

Sister Mary Scullion

For Scullion, Philadelphia's best-known advocate for the poor and the homeless, and the founder of Project HOME, the visit of Pope Francis to Philadelphia in late September of next year looms large.

"We're hoping to engage more people in these issues just by virtue of his visit," she said.

Jeff Lurie, owner of the Philadelphia Eagles

For Lurie, 2015 is about fixing three things: "Turnovers, number one. You can't be a Super Bowl team if you're going to lead the league in turnovers. Two, the red zone offense. Third, giving up the big play on defense."

Eli Kulp, chef of Fork, A.Kitchen, and High Street

Kulp sees the Philly food scene continuing to blossom in the near future.

"If you think that doing the same thing that you were doing two years ago is gonna cut it anymore, it's not," said Kulp.

Pastor Adán A. Mairena

Mairena, pastor at West Kensington Ministry, is closely watching the 2015 mayoral race. "It's a pivotal year that's gonna determine the next decade."

"For all the big flashy things that are going to happen, we're not addressing that we are the poorest of all the large U.S. cities."

N.A. Poe, comedian and pot activist

Poe is still high off the recent decriminalization of marijuana, and is hoping for positive social change in 2015.

"I believe that Pennsylvania will come to its senses and legalize marijuana so we can invest that money in our failing school system," he said.

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Ask SEPTA

JOE CASEY

SEPTA GENERAL MANAGER

Send your questions about SEPTA services and other issues about the transit agency to tommy.rowan@metro.us. They will be forwarded to Joe Casey who will answer them in a special monthly column here.

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SEPTA AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IN 2015

In 2015, SEPTA will begin transitioning to its modernized fare collection system, the SEPTA Key.
With the new system, customers will use a contactless "SEPTA Key" branded card that can be purchased from local retailers, at station kiosks, SEPTA sales offices and online. This will usher in a transition from outdated fare instruments such as tokens, paper tickets and magnetic stripe passes to cutting-edge chip-enabled payment devices.

Introduction of the new fare collection system will occur in two stages – subways, buses and trolleys will begin in 2015; Regional Rail, CCT Connect Paratransit and parking are scheduled for 2016.

Construction
SEPTA will embark on new initiatives that will play a fundamental role in moving the Philadelphia region forward while ensuring that the transit system will be around for future generations. Shortly after the November 2013 passage of Act 89, Pennsylvania's comprehensive solution for transportation funding, SEPTA launched a new capital construction program — Rebuilding for the Future — to address a $5 billion backlog of critical capital construction projects. SEPTA has already begun to perform some of the work associated with the new program and will continue pressing forward in 2015, with efforts such as upgrades and repairs to critical viaducts on the Media/Elwyn Line and the modernization of power substations that date back to the 1930s.

Work will also continue to meet the federally mandated deadline for the implementation of a Positive Train Control (PTC) system on Regional Rail by Dec. 31, 2015, an effort that will enhance travel safety. We'll also complete work on the Wayne Junction Station, a long-term effort to modernize this historic and key multimodal transfer point.

Improvements will include full ADA accessibility, platform renovations and rehabilitation of the site's historic features.

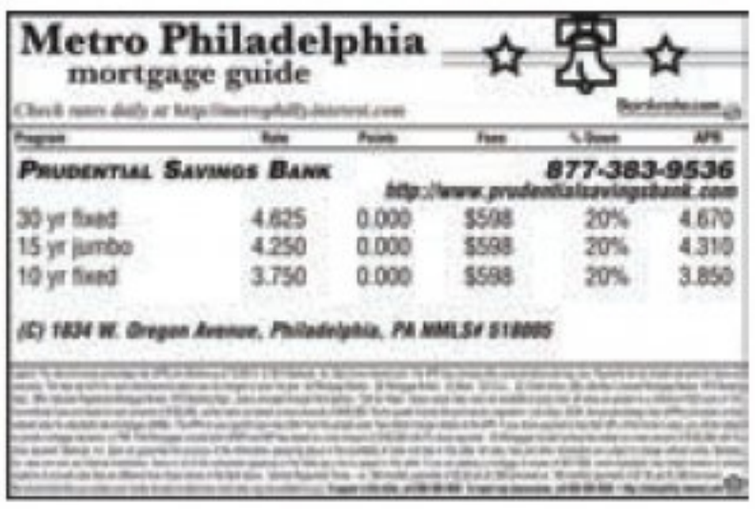
Rail cars
SEPTA ridership is at an all-time high, particularly on Regional Rail, where it has increased by more than 50 percent over the last 15 years. To accommodate this demand, SEPTA plans to update and expand its fleet, which will address current capacity constraints and allow for future growth. In 2015, SEPTA plans to award a contract for new electric locomotive engines to replace units that date back to 1987, and move forward with work to overhaul 22 commuter coaches. Work also continues on the effort to add new bi-level Regional Rail coaches, which will add much-needed capacity for customers.

Parking expansion
The Secane Station overhaul and parking expansion, a $22 million effort that will move forward in 2015, is one of the first steps in an overall effort to strategically add parking throughout the system.

Papal visit
Like many in the region, SEPTA is looking forward to — and preparing for — the much-anticipated visit from Pope Francis and the World Meeting of Families in September. SEPTA will play a major role in the success of this event. We look forward to working with event organizers and our partners in the region to provide world-class transportation for this international event.

Quoted

"The year 2015 will be an extremely busy, but exciting time for SEPTA employees and riders. We're looking forward to a very happy new year, with a number of improvements."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Three ways Obama can mess with Republicans in 2015

President Obama ended 2014 with a bang, getting under Republicans' skin with a climate deal with China, executive action on immigration and a move to normalize relations with Cuba. / GETTY IMAGES

New year. The list may well include some new maneuvers to enrage the opposition party.

Keystone

Obama was coy throughout the midterms about which way he'll go, maintaining that it was in the State Department's hands and that he would weigh the pros and cons. But he doesn't want Congress to tell him what to do. And in recent weeks, he's hinted strongly that he's turned against Keystone XL. He told comedian Stephen Colbert that while it would be good for Canada, "it's not going to push down gas prices here in the United States," and that any economic benefit must be weighed against contributing to the warming of the Earth, "which could be disastrous." In his year-end news conference, the president said that "it's not even going to be a nominal benefit to U.S. consumers." Asked whether he was issuing a veto threat, he demurred. "I'll see what they do," he said of Republicans in Congress. "We'll take that up in the new year."

Campaign finance reform

So-called dark-money nonprofits, such as those affiliated with the Koch brothers, could find it much harder to muck around in elections. Under current practices, up to half of these groups' money can be spent on politics. Changes to the Internal Revenue Service regulations governing 501(c)(4) social welfare organizations could shrink the percentage they can devote to election activities such as advertising. Overall, the aim would be to make it more difficult for any nonprofit group to engage in campaign politics; in practice, it would likely be perceived as a disproportionate handicap of conservative donor-backed organizations.

Climate change

Last year, Obama proposed power-plant standards Republicans oppose to reduce carbon dioxide by 26 percent by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030 from 2005 levels. The standards are set to be issued in June, and then states will have another year to adopt their own plans to carry the standards out. McConnell will make it a top priority to try to stop Obama, either by blocking funding to carry out the policy or by changing provisions of the Clean Air Act, said David Doniger, director of the Natural Resources Defense Council climate and clean air program. "It will be fought over by the Republicans all through the year," he said. BLOOMBERG

Quoted

"There will be lots of lawsuits and so on. But the administration's very committed to this."

Doniger

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Gadgets

Smartwatch and fitness bands

The expectation is that the smartwatch devices will continue to struggle next year, especially since there are rumors and almost assurances that Microsoft, Apple and Google must launch their models to run exclusively with their smartphones. Sony has already released its third model this year. Meanwhile, a new generation of fitness bands with much slicker designs will show up as soon as January. "I believe by June, people we know will be wearing them. Sorry, Dick Tracy," Kaplan jokes.

WANISE MARTINEZ, MWN

Tech in 2015: New gadgets to watch for

Devices. Metro chats with industry experts about the gadgetry on the horizon in the upcoming year.

WEARABLE SOLAR DRESS
METRO WORLD NEWS

As it was in 2014, smart clothing is one of the great bets in tech this year. According to analysts, the manufacturers of "wearables" must hone their designs soon to target wearers' different needs, so these pieces and accessories can really start catching on with everyday consumers, not just technology aficionados. Also, they need to be produced as pieces that are not only intelligent but also that won't harm the environment. "If you thought this space was already annoying, just wait for next year," says Jeremy Kaplan, editor-in-chief of tech news site Digital Trends.

Google Glass, finally?

This jaw-dropping innovative device remains controversial, not only due to its price tag, but also because its lack of wholesale release. Some say the Glass will be seen on faces in the very near future, but others think that it might end up being an enormously expensive dead end for Google. The latest news about the gizmo is that a fresh version with Intel chips will launch next year.

Smart machines

As we saw in so many movies, artificial intelligence designed to improve our lives — with gadgets such as virtual personal assistants, robot prototypes, home appliances and tools with gesture control, smart thermostats and security systems — will continue to become a more feasible reality. All these inventions are becoming even more modernized thanks to the advanced data gathering and deep analytics that, combined with advanced algorithms, can allow the systems to understand us, our environment and act autonomously.

WANISE MARTINEZ, MWN

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Up 0.7 percent. Census puts US population at 320.09 million

The Census Bureau projected the world population on Jan. 1 at about 7.21 billion, a 1.08 percent increase from New Year's Day in 2014. / GETTY IMAGES

U.S. population numbers will rise to 320.09 million people as of Jan. 1, up 0.73 percent from a year earlier, the Census Bureau said on Monday.

The Census Bureau said in a statement that the figure represents an increase of about 11.35 million people, or 3.67 percent, since the last population count on April 1, 2010.

"In January 2015, the U.S. is expected to experience a birth every eight seconds and one death every 12 seconds. Meanwhile, net international migration is expected to add one person to the U.S. population every 33 seconds," the Census Bureau said.

It said the combination of births, deaths and net international migration would add at least one person to the population every 16 seconds.

The Census Bureau estimated that about 4.3 births and 1.8 deaths will occur worldwide every second in January.

REUTERS

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New routine. Winter is the ideal time to start practicing mind-body yoga

Between the shopping, cooking, visiting, parties, bad weather and traveling, who has the time or energy to exercise? But before you settle back into the couch, remember that all those reasons you have for not exercising are exactly the reasons why you should.

It's easy during the busy holiday season to fall out of the good habits that keep you healthy. One of those healthy habits should be yoga, and we talked to celebrity trainer Kristin McGee about why during a class hosted by the insurance company Aflac, which covers expenses when workers are sick or injured.

Prevent accidents

Yoga teaches awareness of your body and strengthens your core, which helps improve balance and can prevent injuries as ice and snow become a problem. "You're using your own body to support yourself in poses, and you get that in the real world as well," says McGee. "You're much less likely to trip and fall; it's easier for you to use your body in a way that's safe."

Don't let stress wreck your mood

"Now that stress is so prevalent and that it's one of the leading causes of disease, yoga really helps with stress release. And I think when we are more stressed, we don't think as well, and we're more accident-prone," says McGee. Learning to focus on your breath and clearing your mind during yoga can help you do the same when the holiday season becomes overwhelming. "When you're centered and you're in a better place in your life and you feel fit and healthy on the inside and you've got that peace of mind, you just naturally move better." EVA KIS

Healthy habit

Keep your resolutions on track

Using your body as leverage doesn't just build muscles; research has shown it increases bone density. Even more than that, "you learn how to use your joints correctly, hinge from the right areas, not over-muscle your way through things, not overstretch, not pull things," McGee explains. "The flexibility and the joint mobility is great for injury prevention as well because you're not so stiff — a lot of times people injure themselves when a muscle is stiff."

Kristin McGee enjoys yoga because it's easy to fit into her busy life with her toddler son. / PROVIDED

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2
CULTURE

Quoted

"You have to listen to the audience and what they're feeling. Sometimes you make a film and it's very much your artistic creation and you're putting something unusual out there. But this was one for the audience."

Angelina Jolie

Angelina Jolie directed "Unbroken," the tale of Olympian-turned-POW Louie Zamperini (Jack O'Connell, far right). / UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Angelina goes to war

Interview. The actress didn't want "Unbroken," the second film she directed, to be sentimental.

ANGELINA JOLIE
GETTY IMAGES

The last movie Angelina Jolie directed, "The Land of Milk and Honey," was a tough, grueling, brutal look at the Bosnian war. Her latest, "Unbroken," is a tough, grueling, brutal look at the life of Louie Zamperini (played by Jack O'Connell), an Olympian whose service in WWII led him to spend 47 days on a life raft, then another two-and-a-half years in Japanese POW camps. But Jolie insists this film, based on Laura Hillenbrand's best-seller, is more of a crowd-pleaser.

What drove her to make it

"Like everybody, we wake up and read the news. We see the events around the world. We're disheartened by so much. We feel overwhelmed and we don't know what's possible. I was halfway through [Laura Hillenbrand's] book and I found myself inspired and on fire. I realized if this was happening to me and I knew it had had that effect on so many others, then this was what we needed to put forward into this world [now]. I'm happy it's coming out during the holidays."

The first cut

"It was three-and-a-half hours. And what was dangerous about it was I liked it. You'd be sure you'd think it was too long. But I thought, 'That feels good to me!' In the end, there were about four or five scenes that didn't make it. Everything else was trimmed. … You have to listen to the audience and what they're feeling. If they're saying, 'I like that scene but the raft stuff feels too long,' you've got to listen. Sometimes you make a film and it's very much your artistic creation and you're putting something unusual out there. But this was one for the audience."

Stretching herself

"If you'd asked me a few years ago, 'What kind of film do you want to make?' I would never have assumed I'd make a film that included shark attacks and plane crashes. I would never have thought of myself as able to handle that kind of cinematic filmmaking. But I cared about the story so much, I had to learn how to do them."

MATT PRIGGE
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A little help from her friends

Joel and Ethan Coen's advice

"The Coen brothers [who helped co-write] told me something that helped. They said when you put a book down, you have a certain feeling and a certain understanding. That's what [the audience] needs to feel when they walk out of the theater. That's your job. If you literally put this book on film, you won't make a good movie. You won't be of service to anyone." The Coens also made sure it wouldn't be too mawkish: "This film could have easily gone sentimental. It could [have been] too earnest. We had to keep it sharp and keep it open and keep it entertaining for an audience. They were great with personalities and with structure. Being directors — and being the Coen brothers — they were just so brilliant. Especially with the last hour, they just helped it all come together."

Small time with Tim Burton

Interview. The legendary filmmaker made the smallest film he's ever made with "Big Eyes."

Director Tim Burton tells the unusual story of painter Margaret Keane in "Big Eyes." / THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Burton directs Amy Adams, playing the painter, in the docudrama-comedy "Big Eyes." / THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Tim Burton has never made a film as small, budgetwise, as the comedic docudrama "Big Eyes." Adjusted for inflation, his latest — chronicling the story of Margaret Keane (Amy Adams), a painter whose husband, Walter (Christoph Waltz), took credit for her immensely popular paintings of sad children with huge eyes — actually has a smaller budget than "Pee-wee's Big Adventure" and "Ed Wood," the latter written, like "Big Eyes," by Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski. The film tells a sad story, even though its Golden Globe nominations (for Adams and Waltz) are in the "Comedy or Musical" category.

Margaret's paintings were huge. What's your memory of them from childhood?
They were all over the place. Prints were in living rooms, restaurants, doctors' offices, dentists' offices, supermarkets. When the story broke [that Margaret had painted them], it wasn't blown out because it wasn't considered art by critics. If it had been a major artist it would have been embraced by the critical art community. It would have been a front page story. But this was the third page in the Honolulu News.

Did you like her work growing up?
"Liking" is a funny word. I was fascinated by it, because a) it was around and b) I found it disturbing. You'd go to somebody's house and you'd go, "Why do you have a picture of a crying child on your wall?"

Some of your actors tend to play outsized, but Amy Adams has a very internal quality.
A lot of actors I work with I like because they remind me of silent movie actors. But Margaret is such an internal character. I was fascinated by how much she could portray while being so shy and internal. You could easily see that persona as a victim. But she's not a victim. ... She's one of the quietest, under-the-radar feminists I've ever met.

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Genre talk

Rom-com meets horror

"It's slightly weird that the Golden Globes classified this as a comedy. It is funny, but it's also serious, though one would hesitate to call it a full-on drama. ... I find everything funny. Even horror. I don't know if I could make a real one because I always find them quite funny. But I always love a mixture of things. I was surprised at seeing this with an audience, how funny some things come across. Because it's so absurd ... a dark rom-com psychological horror movie comedy. Good luck trying to sell this one!"

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Horror. 'The Woman in Black' sequel: Even scary sans ghosts

Forty years after the events in the Daniel Radcliffe-led "The Woman in Black," a young schoolteacher (Phoebe Fox) trying to protect a group of children during WWII happens upon an evil ghost with its sights set on one of her young, catatonic charges.

The lowdown The second "The Woman in Black" is one of those films that in the '50s or '60s would have been slotted in a second half of a double bill. It's nothing special — just a well-executed series of slow-burn scares building to a semi-comprehensible climax. Director Tom Harper has clearly studied all the English classics of horror. The film pits a repressed woman, haunted by having given her only child up for adoption, against supernatural forces. Every shot is a few notches shy of pitch black, meaning we're always shocked when the ghost emerges from the shadows.

Like the best ghost movies, "Woman in Black: Angel of Death" could function even without a spectral presence. In fact, the arrival of a ghost ruins it, in a sense. The real horror is World War II, with which its characters have had to wrestle. Everyone's plagued by grief, displacement and the constant fear of death. As in "The Babadook," the fact that there's actually a psychotic spirit is just another thing to worry about. Gloomy and melancholic, this isn't an anonymous "boo!" machine. In fact, it's a better portrait of living with war than it is a horror entry about living with ghosts.

Review

'The Woman in Black: Angel of Death'

Director: Tom Harper

Stars: Phoebe Fox, Helen McCrory

Rating: PG-13

• • •

Schoolteacher Phoebe Fox is spooked by ghosts in the second "The Woman in Black." / NICK WALL

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The weekly Yelp. Go here to get fit in 2015

The overindulgence of the holidays often brings along unwanted pounds. With a new year comes a new beginning, and there's no better time to make a change. Here are Yelp's top picks for torching calories.

Flywheel Sports

1521 Locust St., Center City
I've been spinning for a couple years now, and these classes are definitely the most challenging — my whole body is dripping in sweat after 45 minutes. **HALEY T.**

CoreFitness

Fairmount
I met Caitlin, my trainer, and she talked me into coming to a bootcamp. I had never done one before and the first one was free. It was fun, informative and everyone was working to their own abilities. **TANYA M.**

Philly Power Yoga

2016 Walnut St., Rittenhouse
I've been coming here for over three years. It's one of the best workouts around: calming, stress relieving, active, etc. I always feel great after! **LAUREN P.**

RowZone

1717 Chestnut St., Rittenhouse
RowZone bootcamp classes combine rowing machine sets on the erg with weights and calisthenics. Usually it's a good mix of cardio and weights that keeps your heart rate up throughout the entire class. **AMANDA C.**

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yelp

MUSIC

Mae

Friday, 8 p.m.
Electric Factory
421 N. Seventh St.
$20-$25, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com
This Virginia band's name is an acronym for "Multi-sensory Aesthetic Experience." That makes them sound like some kind of sonic art installation, but they're actually a power pop band with sublime melodies and spiritual leanings. Despite an official breakup in 2010, they've played several shows since; this tour celebrates the 10th anniversary of their second record, "The Everglow."

PROVIDED

Gustafer Yellowgold's Show

Saturday, 11:30 a.m.
World Cafe Live
3025 Walnut St.
$10, 215-222-1400
www.worldcafelive.com
Animator, musician and storyteller Gustafer Yellowgold's smart and whimsical live show is geared toward kids, but not in the way that drives adults bonkers. In fact, he's opened for both Wilco and the Polyphonic Spree, and many of his fans have long since graduated elementary school. Any kid who digs this guy now will be a totally cool adult.

COMEDY

PROVIDED

Mark Normand

Friday and Saturday
Helium Comedy Club
2031 Sansom St.
$21-$28, 215-496-9001
www.heliumcomedy.com
There's a punchy, old school quality to Mark Normand's stand-up jokes, which he delivers with a smooth, snarky tone. He's got no time for political correctness, and loves to push the envelope into over-the-top crude territory. Nonetheless it's all in good fun — he just seems to love playing the wiseass, and he's clever enough to pull it off.

Dirty Laundry

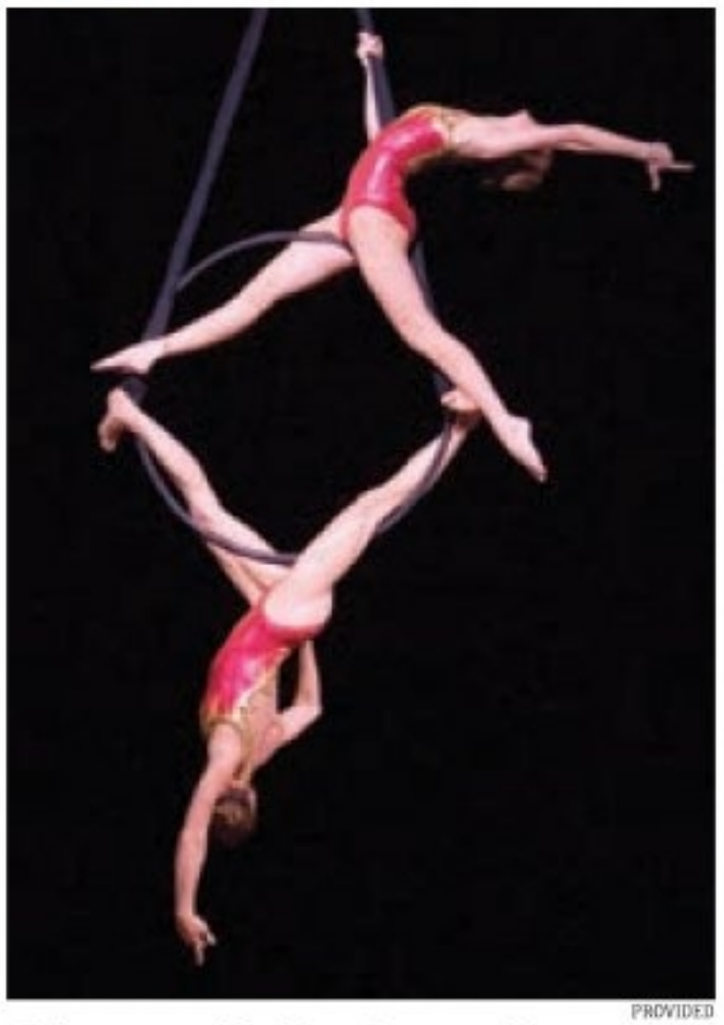
Saturday, 7:30 p.m.
Adrienne Theater
2030 Sansom St.
$10-$12, 267-233-1556
www.phillyimprovtheater.com
Part of the Philly Improv Theater's Dynamite Series, a showcase for innovative comedy projects, this show that takes a look into the ongoing lives of a typical Philadelphia family, strives for realism, right down to the actors being the same age as the characters they're playing — a welcome change from many TV shows with their 25-year-old "teens."

FOOD

Decadent Gourmet Food Tour

Saturdays and Sundays, ongoing
Meet-up location TBA upon ticket purchase
$35, 800-979-3370
www.zerve.com/phillyfoods
You may have made some dietary New Year's resolution, but it still feels like 2014, doesn't it? Seems like a perfect time to take this epicurean food tour, which includes stops at Reading Terminal Market, DiBruno Bros. and Capogiro Gelato. Chocolate cake truffles, top-shelf falafel, gelato and sorbetto, fine cheeses — it's all here, and it all sounds delicious.

DANCE



PROVIDED

Cirque de la Symphonie

Saturday and Sunday
Kimmel Center
300 S. Broad St.
$60-$135, 215-893-1999
www.kimmelcenter.org
This travelling circus company with acrobats, jugglers and aerialists will join the Philadelphia Orchestra for a fusion of circus and orchestral music. The performers synchronize their stunts to the live music, which seems like a whole other stunt in and of itself. They'll be performing to a broad range of selections,including Tchaikovsky, Leonard Bernstein and John Williams.

OUTDOORS

Winter Bird Census

Saturday, 8 a.m.
Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education
8480 Hagy's Mill Rd.
Free, 215-482-7300
www.schuylkillcenter.org
If you've ever wanted to learn about the practice of bird watching — or birding, as it's known — here's a chance. You'll be paired with a seasoned vet who knows the subtle differences between calls and colorings while you enjoy a day in the woods and help the Schuylkill Center pick up information on its winter avian residents.

DANCE

BILL HEBERT

ETC Performance Series

Saturday and Sunday
Community Education Center
3500 Lancaster Ave.
$10, 215-387-1911
www.cecarts.org
This concert is an eclectic set of performances in a range of genres including music, dance, spoken word and performance art — you can never be sure just what you'll see, other than that it will be original.

ART

Anne Canfield: 'Fugue State'

Through January 11
Seraphin Gallery
1108 Pine St.
Free, 215-923-7000
seraphin.squarespace.com
As the title of this show suggests, Anne Canfield's paintings evoke a perspective somewhere between waking and dreams. Many feature anonymous suburban landscapes, but she depicts this normally banal scenery with a hyper-saturated brightness that turns the real surreal, calling to mind that mysterious old nursery rhyme that ends with "Life is but a dream."

David Lynch: 'The Unified Field'

Through January 11
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
118 N. Broad St.
$12-$15, 215-972-7600
www.pafa.org
You've got nine days left to check out this exhibit of eccentric filmmaker David Lynch's paintings and drawings, which includes work from his time as a painting student at PAFA. Overall, there are about 90 pieces spanning nearly five decades. Anyone who enjoys his films will find just as much to love and puzzle at here.

MOVIES

'Lolita: Slave to Entertainment'

Saturday, 2 p.m.
The Rotunda
4014 Walnut St.
Free
www.therotunda.org
Looking for a feel-good movie to start your new year? This 2003 documentary isn't the one. It tells the story of Lolita, the star performing orca whale at the Miami Seaquarium, alleging a violent capture in the wild and ongoing cruel treatment at the hands of her keepers, including social isolation and an oppressively small tank.

GOING OUT

3rd Annual Clubhouse '90s Singalong Spectacular

Saturday, 8 p.m.
The Clubhouse
1125 S. 13th St.
$15
www.facebook.com
There's a sickness going around affecting people between the ages of 25 and 35 — it's called '90s nostalgia, and there's no sure-fire cure, but this party might just work. Put on your best (or worst '90s fashion and sing your heart out to everything from Nirvana to Hootie. Only one rule: "No one is too cool to sing along with anything."

SPOKEN WORD

Pigeon Poetry Slam: Women of the World Qualifier

Friday, 8:30 p.m.
PhilaMOCA
531 N. 12th St.
$10-$15, thephillypigeon@gmail.com
www.thephillypigeon.webs.com
Come see some bad-ass poets duke it out verbally for a chance to compete in the Women of the World Poetry Slam. The featured performer is Porsha Olayiwola, a 2012 runner-up. Her bio describes her poetic intentions thusly: "to speak, love, praise and maintain a cypher that is undocumented, uncontrollable and just plain ole dope."

MATTHEW DINARO

Best of 2014

Through the holidays, Metro takes a look at the issues important to letter writers in 2014. Whether it was gun violence, domestic violence or world conflicts (or cyclists!) Metro readers had a lot to say. Here are some excerpts:

Justice

Another innocent black man gets killed by white cops. Why hasn't the situation evolved? Because our response hasn't. Intellects like Dr. Charles Ogletree called for "a lot of noise," and organizers handed out markers and signs. This country does not need another howling, poster board protest. And Ferguson, Missouri, does not need our sympathy. They need our action.
ADAM FRIEDMAN (AUG. 20)

Why is it there is no uproar in our community about the weekly crime in our neighborhoods? A white cop shoots a black man and we protest — and some riot — but when black men shoot other black men, we stay silent? Where are Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson when Chicago gets shot up?
PATRICIA HOLMES-LEWIS (AUG. 28)

I've been a law-abiding citizen my whole life, and a pacifist too, but I must say that the Garner scandal has me wanting to smash windows and burn cars too — so maybe the DAs and police need to realize how badly their corruption is backfiring.
LARKIN NOVAK, VIA EMAIL (DEC. 11)

Dec. 29's answer

THE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Opinion

TOM FOREMAN

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT FOR CNN

Like an old house slouching into its baseboards, I could use some renovations. And what better time to take them on than at New Year's? That's what I tell myself pretty much every time January rolls around, and by late December I'm wondering where all those good intentions have gone. Fortunately, each winter I have a seemingly endless supply of suggestions to help me renew my quest. Not my own ideas, mind you, but from others.

My wife can tell you right now that I should manage money better, spend more time listening/less time talking, and she would not mind if I abandoned once and for all my ever-more fleeting hopes of becoming an Olympic athlete. That conversation usually goes something like this:

"Hey," I say, "curling looks fairly easy. Maybe I can try that."

"Sure," she responds. "Why don't you start by sliding a few extra ice cubes into my drink?"

She's hilarious.

My daughters have "self-improvement" ideas too, which largely consist of me becoming less sarcastic about their friends, and more inclined to watch reruns of "The Gilmore Girls."

Even the dog weighs in on this game of "let's give Tom a makeover!" She's clearly in favor of me waking up earlier to feed her, staying up later to walk her, and giving up entirely on any idea I have about her fetching the paper.

That conversation goes like this: "Get the paper, Nola! Go get it!"

"With my mouth? That's disgusting," she says. "Why don't you get the paper with your fancy, opposable thumbs?"

I don't mind these gentle prods because I think most of us have had loads of ideas about how others can improve. For example, I think most presidents should act more straightforward, and less like political schemers. Congress too. I think government folks in general should remind themselves that they work for us, not us for them.

But I've usually found this to be true …year in and out: Those who are smart enough to take advice, seldom really need it. And those who do need it, are usually too foolish to know.

CNN=POLITICS

Sudoku: Easy and hard

	1					9		8
		5	8		2		7	6
							3	4
	5			7	4			
	4		5	8	9		6	
			1	2			4	
9	6							
8	2		6		1	3		
5		3					9	

				3				
	2			7			9	
7		9	8		5			
	9	5				1	6	7
	7	8				9	2	
1	6	2				3	5	
			7		3	6		1
	8			4			7	
				6				

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Horoscope

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Making extra money should be your goal. Check out projects that you can tackle on a part-time basis. Doing research could end up making you a tidy sum.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. You will encounter someone with differing beliefs. If you are unclear about something, ask. You could end up in a vulnerable position if you have misread someone's actions.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Refuse to give in to fear and be receptive to change. Don't waste energy fighting the inevitable. If you do your best to embrace life, change will be beneficial.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Gear up to make the most of the coming year. Start with a new look and mindset. Have confidence in your talent and disregard anyone who tries to hold you back.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. The information you need is there for the taking. Network with people who can educate you and help you advance. Individuals who have experienced what you face will provide you with knowledge and insight.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Helping others will provide an opportunity to showcase some of your less obvious talents. It's possible to supplement your income with something you enjoy.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. Living in the past will bring you down. Consider what you would like to accomplish and take the steps necessary to get there. Face the days ahead with optimism.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Take a leadership role. Whether it is at your workplace, club or community center, let others know that you are able to get the job done. Positive changes are on the horizon.

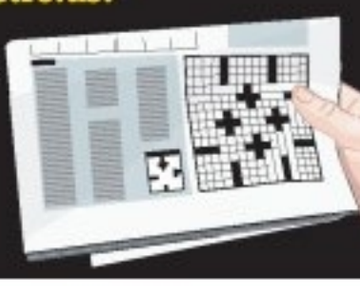
♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Romance is on the rise. Put your responsibilities on hold and concentrate on your personal life. Make a promise that will help cement an important relationship.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Don't expect others to agree with your plans. Consider doing what is necessary to improve the comfort or appearance of your home. Doing things on your own will be rewarding.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Hard work will finally pay off. Gather all the information you have collected and put it to proper use.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Don't lose sight of what you are after. If you allow someone or something to sidetrack you, it will cause you to lose valuable time. **EUGENIA LAST**

Visit us online at **Metro.us.**
Use your smartphone to find today's crossword answers! Download and open the Blippar app on your smartphone and hold the screen over the puzzle.



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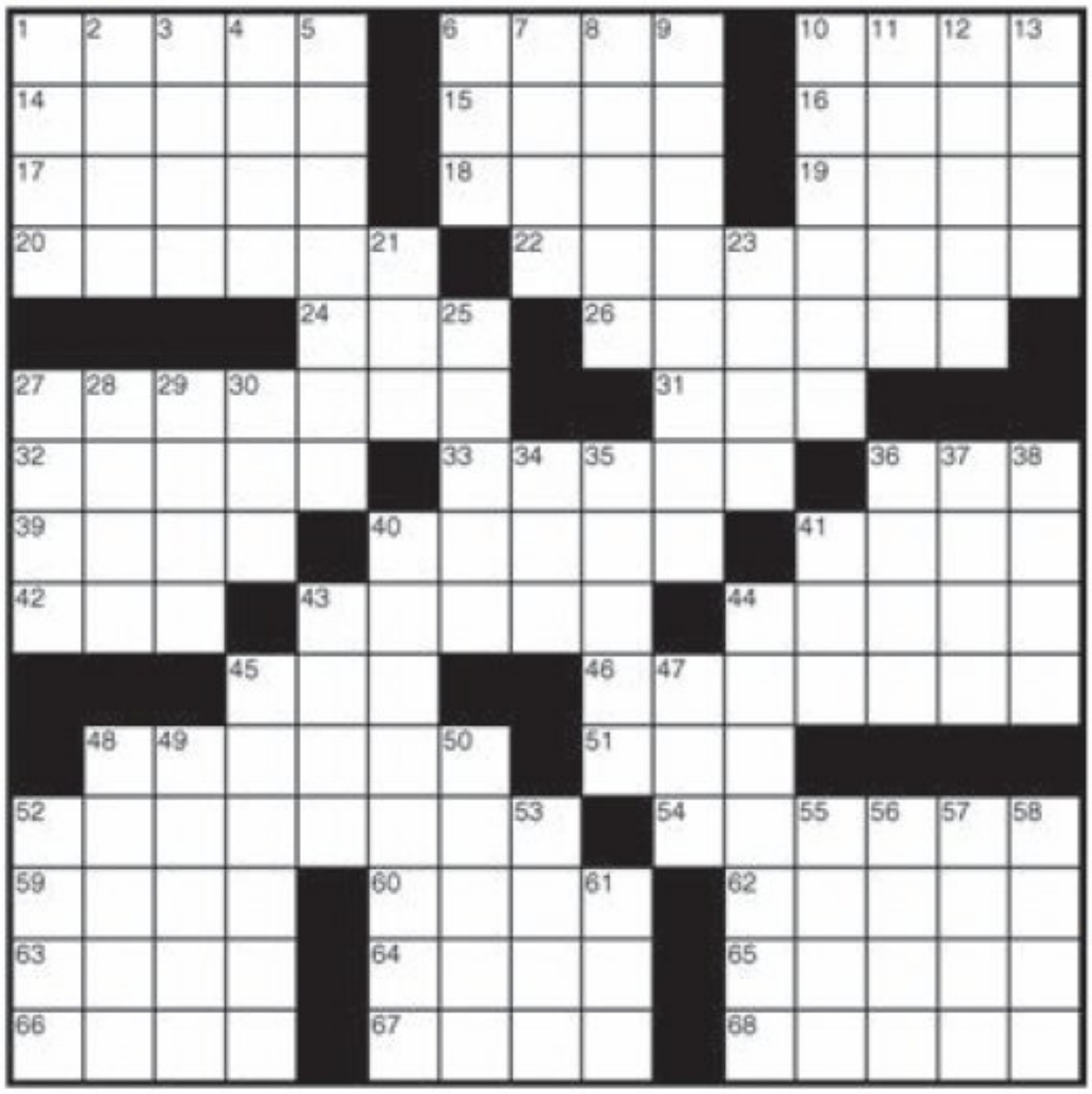
Crossword



Across

1 Counted the minutes
6 Floor model
10 Strait-laced
14 A Franklin invention
15 Prof's place
16 Indulge wanderlust
17 Military caps
18 Doggie treat
19 Pierre's girl
20 Refines, as metal
22 Bacon-bringer's grind (2 wds.)
24 Carpet
26 Horned animals
27 Breed of chicken
31 Journal VIPs
32 Clothe
33 Winning
36 Feedbag morsel
39 FBI agent (hyph.)
40 '60s dance craze
41 Run words together
42 Walton or Spade
43 Update a watch
44 Pooh creator
45 Wedding rental
46 Wield a scalpel
48 Tours of duty
51 Corral
52 Kind of neckline
54 Talked on and on
59 Has a cough
60 Placed
62 Ism
63 Lazing about
64 Cogito -- sum
65 Hair-raising
66 Fishing gear
67 Shut with force
68 More astute

Down

1 Reproving clucks
2 List detail
3 Pout about
4 Black-hearted
5 Wreck
6 Copy a tape
7 Plenty, for Tennyson
8 Trivial
9 Spew steam from under the hood
10 Shrimps
11 Bard's teen
12 Dorm climbers
13 Gentle
21 California's Big —
23 Notorious pirate
25 Nibbles
27 Trails behind
28 Funny Bombeck
29 Lab weight
30 Chinese dynasty
34 Step on it
35 Bar legally
36 Earthen jar
37 Tuna anagram
38 Holly and mistletoe's partner
40 Silk and wool
41 Polite word
43 Pealed
44 Threatens
45 Glittery strands
47 Violin knob
48 Playground gear
49 Ball-gown material
50 Tangle
52 Au —(nanny)
53 Prefix with byte
55 La — tar pits
56 Arctic floater
57 Ms. Falco
58 Take-charge type
61 — Perignon

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3 SPORTS

New Year, same teams

Flyers, 76ers in action

The Sixers and Flyers start 2015 with Friday night tests on the road. The Flyers continue their trip in Carolina against the Hurricanes (at 7 p.m. on CSN) while the 76ers head to Phoenix to face the Suns (at 9 p.m. on the Comcast Network).

Wild weekend on tap

NFL playoffs.
Ravens and Steelers renew rivalry and Detroit looks to derail Dallas during Wild Card weekend.

Pittsburgh and Baltimore tango yet again Saturday night. / GETTY IMAGES

Don't let anyone tell you the "most wonderful time of the year" is in the rearview mirror. The first weekend in January signals the beginning of the NFL playoffs, with Wild Card weekend offering a four-game feast of win-or-go-home action. A look at the slate:

Arizona at Carolina (Saturday, 4:35 p.m., ESPN)
Just one month ago, the Panthers had three wins. Now, they're a solid bet to advance to the Divisional Round. In the last three games Cam Newton has played in, Carolina is 3-0 and has outscored its opponents, 92-26. In the past three games Ryan Lindley has played in, Arizona is 1-2 and has been outscored 35-61.

By the numbers

4

The No. 4 seed has been lucky in recent years as the Giants and Ravens won Super Bowls coming out of their respective conferences in 2011 and 2012. The Colts and Panthers are this year's No. 4 seeds.

Baltimore at Pittsburgh (Saturday, 8:15 p.m., NBC)
It seems as though these two meet in January every year, but in actuality the AFC North rivals have clashed just three times in the postseason. The Steelers are 3-0 against Baltimore all-time in the playoffs.

Cincinnati at Indianapolis (Sunday, 1:05 p.m., CBS)
Early in the season the Bengals looked like world-beaters. That is until they played the Patriots in Week 5. Midway through the season the Colts looked like world-beaters. That is until they played the Patriots in Week 11. These Patriots punching-bags meet in the early game Sunday. The winner will see the … you guessed it … Patriots in Round 2 as long as Pittsburgh takes care of business Saturday night.

Detroit at Dallas (Sunday, 4:40 p.m., FOX)
The Lions haven't beaten a 2014 playoff team since they edged the Packers, 19-7, in Week 3, so it's been awhile since they've truly impressed. The Cowboys, on the other hand, have been arguably the most impressive team in the league in December as they averaged 41.2 points per game in the regular season's final month.

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2014: Best of

NFL. Metro picks its top performers from the Eagles 2014 season.

With the offseason looming, several big decisions will need to be made by the Eagles' front office staff. Impending free agents Jeremy Maclin and Brandon Graham may or may not return, and Nick Foles and LeSean McCoy are expecting big contract extensions.

Those choices won't be easy, particularly with several of those players among the best in the NFL at their respective positions. Here's Metro's take on the best the Eagles had to offer during the 2014 season.

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@evan_macy
evan.macy@metro.us

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Team MVP: McCoy

This year's Eagles set a bevy of offensive records, so selecting the team's most valuable catalyst is no easy task. But with all circumstances considered, LeSean McCoy gets our nod. The back compiled 1,319 yards behind 10 different offensive linemen. He also was a workhorse for the Birds, racking up 312 carries and 28 receptions. It wasn't the career year Shady posted in 2013, but it certainly proved 2013 wasn't an aberration.

Top defender: Barwin

The Eagles' pass rush was the spark for most the team's — relative — success on defense, and their top performer was undoubtedly Pro Bowler Connor Barwin. The outside linebacker collected 14.5 sacks and forced a pair of fumbles while making 64 tackles, good for third on the squad.

- **Rookie of the Year: Jordan Matthews** — Second-round pick Jordan Matthews became a star late in the year, finishing the season ranked second all-time among Eagles rookies with 67 receptions, second with 872 yards and tied for second with eight touchdowns.

- **Most Improved player: Mychal Kendricks** — The Eagles lost their defensive leader DeMeco Ryans midseason in Houston, but Mychal Kendricks stepped in and made himself Ryans' clear successor. The young budding star led Philadelphia with 83 combined tackles. He also picked up four sacks and caused three fumbles.

the Birds

- **Best offseason acquisition: Darren Sproles** — Darren Sproles was signed as a free agent after he left the Saints and scored two punt return touchdowns while leading the team with six scores on the ground. He was selected for his first ever Pro Bowl after ten years in the NFL this season.

- **Least valuable player: Bradley Fletcher** — Bradley Fletcher may have cost the Eagles a playoff berth as Dez Bryant and DeSean Jackson burned him with great frequency on back-to-back weeks. He proved to be the weak link in the Eagles' defense as the team fell from 9-3 to 10-6.

Top offensive player: Maclin

DeSean Jackson's offseason drama paired with Jeremy Maclin's decision to sign a one-year deal to prove his worth put considerable pressure on the veteran wideout heading into 2014. But Maclin surely did not disappoint. Look for a big payday this offseason after the speedster led the Eagles with 1,318 yards on 85 receptions and 10 touchdown catches.

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Grading the 2014 Eagles:

NFL. The Eagles won 10 games, but it wasn't enough to earn a playoff berth.

Two years removed from 4-12, it's hard to imagine Eagles fans being disappointed with a 10-6 record in Chip Kelly's second NFL season.

But there aren't many other ways to describe the 2014 season aside from "disappointing."

"We didn't make the playoffs," Kelly said. "You're all measured by one thing: Did you win a Super Bowl or did you not win a Super Bowl? So we didn't make the playoffs and don't have the opportunity to compete for the Super Bowl."

The Eagles set a team record for points, shattering last year's mark by posting 474 (last year they scored 442).

The Eagles also set team records by scoring 54 touchdowns, completing 390 passes, compiling 4,581 passing yards and 356 first downs.

But it wasn't enough as the club was buried by turnovers (they led the league) and a defense that allowed the 28th most yards in the NFL.

They were also plagued by over 1,000 yards worth of penalties.

Before we watch the upcoming playoffs, turn the page on the 2014 Eagles and anticipate a rejuvenated and contending squad in 2015, here's a look at the Birds' season report card — not quite good enough to make the honor roll, and certainly not the playoffs.

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evan.macy@metro.us

Quarterbacks

C+

Nick Foles and Mark Sanchez posted huge numbers offensively, combining for 300-yard games eight times in 2014. The two combined for 27 touchdowns but also threw 21 interceptions. Sanchez, believe it or not, had a better passer rating than Foles with an 88.4 mark. But the former Jet was also sacked with abundant frequency, 23 times to just nine for Foles.

"I thought our quarterbacks, when you look at their rating ... I thought they played good football," Kelly said. "The turnover part of it hurt us."

The Eagles managed to throw for the most yards in team history and had the highest completion percentage. But none of that mattered as the team lost too many close games.

"I've never been on a team or coached a team that has had this many turnovers," Kelly said.

FOLES, WHILE SOLID, WAS WELL SHORT OF HIS 2013 PACE DURING HIS EIGHT GAMES IN 2014.

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Chris Polk was a touchdown machine at the goalline.

Running backs

B+

The only reason the Birds don't get an A in this department is due to a few games midseason where the run-game was nearly non-existent (namely vs. the 49ers). The lack of consistency and whirlwind of offensive line woes hurt the running game at times, but more than 1,300 yards from LeSean McCoy is nothing to thumb your nose at.

The Eagles had a three-headed monster behind the line of scrimmage, as Shady was assisted by the nimble but shifty Darren Sproles and his 329 yards (5.8 yards per carry) and six touchdowns, and the goalline power of Chris Polk (who scored four TD's on just 46 carries).

Wide receivers and tight ends

B

The primary receivers certainly earned their keep this season, as Jeremy Maclin exploded as a bona fide No. 1 pass-catcher (1,318 yards, 10 TD) and Jordan Matthews became a rookie sensation (872 yards, 8 TD). Tight end Zach Ertz was also dynamic and useful down the stretch, setting an Eagles record for receptions (15) in a game against the Redskins in Week 16. He gained 702 yards in all.

There was a big drop off, as Riley Cooper proved to be much less of a red zone threat than he was last year catching just three touchdown passes.

Brent Celek and Jeremy Maclin

Offensive line

B-

If the Eagles' offensive line had been healthy all season long and the same result transpired on the field, this group would have garnered a considerably lower grade.

But the O-line was resilient, produced a pair of Pro Bowlers (Jason Peters and Jason Kelce) and allowed just 32 sacks (compared to 49 on defense).

Three main anchors on the line, Lane Johnson, Evan Mathis and Kelce missed a considerable number of snaps in 2014 but the line overcame and was ultimately reliable.

A healthy line in 2015 will be key for a "bounce back" year.

KELCE EARNED A PRO BOWL NOD FOR HIS WORK ON THE EAGLES OFFENSIVE LINE.

Defense holds Birds back

Special teams

A

Chris Maragos was one of many unsung heroes on the Eagles special teams unit.

Typically a special teams unit is considered a success if it doesn't screw up. Throw in a touchdown or two and a solid kicker and you've got a decent third phase.

The Eagles' special teams in 2014 were perhaps the best in recent NFL history.

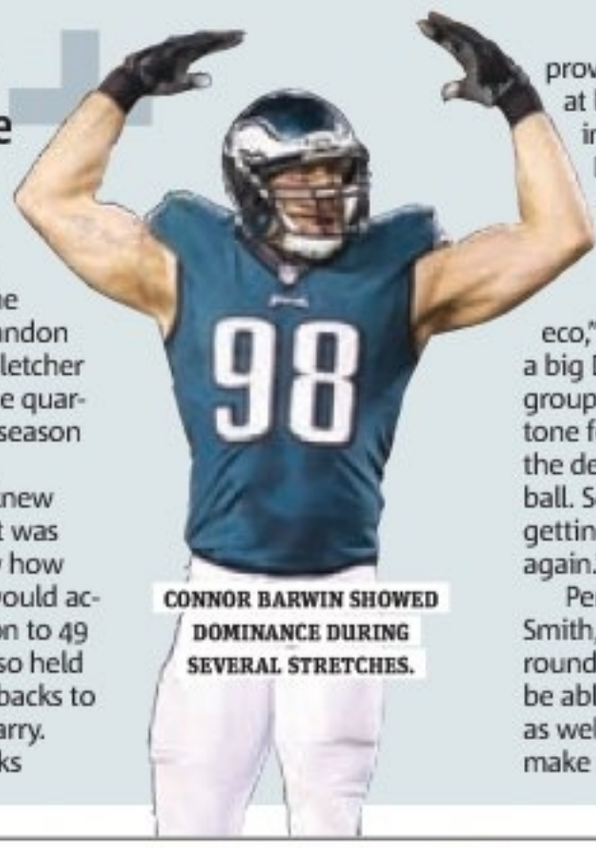
Ten different Birds reached the end zone on 11 different return touchdowns, the latter the third most in NFL history and former an NFL record.

The Eagles punt return unit was responsible for five touchdowns (three blocked punt returns, two punt returns) in 2014 while Sproles ran for the second most punt-return yards in team history.

All that without giving credit to punter Donnie Jones, who routinely pinned opponents inside the 20, and Cody Parkey, who set NFL and team records with his 32 field goals and 150 points.

Linebackers/ defensive line

B+



CONNOR BARWIN SHOWED DOMINANCE DURING SEVERAL STRETCHES.

Connor Barwin reeled off 14.5 sacks, Vinny Curry burst onto the scene with nine while Brandon Graham (5.5) and Fletcher Cox (4.0) each made quarterbacks quiver all season long.

Though many knew the Eagles 3-4 front was talented, few knew how effective the unit would actually be. In addition to 49 sacks, the group also held opposing running backs to just 3.7 yards per carry.

Mychal Kendricks proved to be formidable at linebacker, filling in for the injured DeMeco Ryans, a player Kelly is hoping returns healthy in 2015.

"We need DeMeco," the coach said. "I'm a big DeMeco Fan. As a group, he really sets the tone for everybody on the defensive side of the ball. So it's just a matter of getting DeMeco healthy again."

Perhaps in 2015 Marcus Smith, the Eagles first round pick last spring will be able to crack the lineup as well. The rookie did not make a tackle in 2014.

Secondary

D

Cary Williams was inconsistent at best at cornerback.

That the Eagles still managed to win 10 games with their blundering, penalty-committing incompetent secondary is a testament to the rest of the team.

Nate Allen led the group with four interceptions (the defense had just 12, compared to 21 surrendered on offense) while Malcom Jenkins proved to be a positive locker room force while picking off three passes of his own.

But that's about it for bright spots.

Bradley Fletcher and Cary Williams could rarely keep up with the top receivers in the league, guys like Odell Beckham Jr, Dez Bryant and DeSean Jackson.

The group allowed just over 264 yards per game to opposing quarterbacks, 7.8 yards per reception and 30 passing touchdowns, as well as the most plays over 50 yards in team history.

Major changes must come for the Eagles' thin and lackluster secondary heading into next season.

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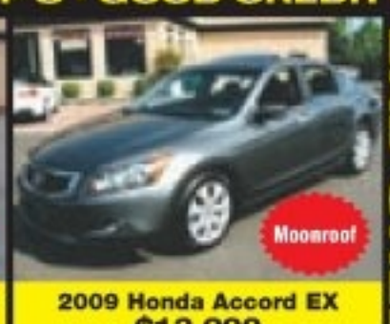

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